

Application Serial No.: 10/538,979

Junichi Yoshinaga

Response to Office Action mailed September 12, 2006

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REMARKS

The Office Action rejects claims 18 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant(s) regard as the invention. Applicant has amended claims 18 and 23 as per the Examiner's helpful suggestion to overcome the 112 rejection.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 9, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US patent 6707534 (Bjorklund). The Office Action rejects claims 1, 9, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by US patent 6416908 (Klosner). The Office Action rejects claim 25 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US patent 6304317 (Taniguchi). The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 6-10, 14-16, 20, 21, 25, 26, 30, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US patent 6529262 (Mei). Applicant has cancelled independent claims 1, 9, 14, 20, 25, and 30, which, in combination with the following amendments, renders the above rejections moot.

As per the Examiner's suggestion, Applicant has amended claims 2, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 15, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 31, 32, and 34 to include features of independent claims 1, 9, 14, 20, 25, and 30, respectively. Claims 2-8, 10-13, 15-19, 21-24, 26-29, and 31-34 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Applicant has added new claims 35-36. New claim 35 recites a method of exposing light on a surface area of an object having a curvature comprising the steps of dividing a mask along a contour line into a plurality of rings, passing light according to a pattern of the mask, directing the light passed by the

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pattern of the mask through a lens to the surface area of the object, and altering a focal distance between the lens and the object to expose the light passed by the pattern of the mask on surface areas of the object.

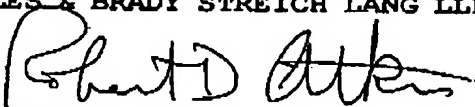
None of the prior art references teach or suggest at least the step of dividing a mask along a contour line into a plurality of rings. Therefore, claims 35-36 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Applicant(s) believe that all information and requirements for the application have been provided to the USPTO. If there are matters that can be discussed by telephone to further the prosecution of the Application, Applicant(s) invite the Examiner to call the undersigned attorney at the Examiner's convenience.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees due with this Response to U.S. PTO Account No. 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,
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December 12, 2006

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